

EXHIBIT

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JS-1703: Additional Al-Haramain Branches, Former
Leader Designated ...Treasury Marks Latest Action in Joint Designation with
Saudi Arabia

PRESS ROOM



FROM THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

June 2, 2004
JS-1703

**Additional Al-Haramain Branches, Former
Leader Designated by
Treasury as Al Qaida Supporters
Treasury Marks Latest Action in Joint Designation with
Saudi Arabia**

The United States and Saudi Arabian governments today announced yet further steps in the war against terrorist financing by jointly designating five additional branches of the Al-Haramain Islamic Foundation (AHF) for the financial, material and logistical support they provided to the al-Qaida network and other terrorist organizations. Today's action marks the latest in a series of joint efforts between the United States and Saudi Arabia in the financial war on terror.

"Terrorists and their tainted dollars have corrupted charity by using the philanthropic spirit and charitable institutions to further their warped motives," said Juan Zarate, Treasury's Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Executive Office for Terrorist Financing and Financial Crimes.

The U.S. and Saudi Arabia are jointly submitting the entities to the United Nations' 1267 Committee to be added to the consolidated list of terrorists tied to al Qaida, Usama bin Laden (UBL) and the Taliban.

The United States is also designating the former leader of Al-Haramain, Aqeel Abdulaziz Al-Aqil, and submitting his name to the UN 1267 Committee for inclusion on the consolidated international list.

"The act of charity is sacrosanct. We need to take every step possible to stop the flow of terrorist funding through charities while preserving the integrity of charitable giving around the world," said Zarate. "The United States is working with our international partners and the charitable community to safeguard this sector from terrorists who mock the very idea of charity by converting good will and humanitarian aid into hate-filled agendas supported by blood money."

Based upon the following information and additional classified material, Treasury is designating Al-Aqil and the branches of AHF located in Afghanistan, Albania, Bangladesh, Ethiopia and the Netherlands.

Afghanistan

In Afghanistan, prior to the removal of the Taliban from power, AHF supported the cause of Jihad and was linked to the UBL financed Makhtab al-Khidmat (MK), a pre-cursor organization of al Qaida and a Specially Designated Global Terrorist pursuant to the authorities of E.O. 13224.

Following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, activities supporting terrorism in Afghanistan continued. In 2002, activities included involvement with a group of persons trained to attack foreigners in Afghanistan. A journalist suspected of meeting with al Qaida and Taliban members in Afghanistan was reportedly transferring funds on behalf of the al Qaida-affiliated AHF and forwarding videotapes from al Qaida leaders to an Arabic language TV network for broadcast.

Albania

Irfan Tomini Street #58
Tirana, Albania

The U.S. has information that indicates UBL may have financed the establishment of AHF in Albania, which has been used as cover for terrorist activity in Albania and in Europe. In late 2000, a close associate of a UBL operative moved to Albania and was running an unnamed AHF subsidiary. In 1998, the head of Egyptian Islamic Jihad in Albania was reportedly also a financial official for AHF in Albania. This individual, Ahmed Ibrahim al-Nagar, was reportedly extradited from Albania to Egypt in 1998. At his trial in Egypt, al-Nager reportedly voiced his support for UBL and al Qaida's August 1998 terrorist attacks against the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania.

Salih Tivari, a senior official of the moderate Albanian Muslim community, was murdered in January 2002. Ermir Gjinishi, who had been supported by AHF, was detained in connection with the murder, but no charges were filed; he was later released by Albanian authorities. Just prior to being murdered, Tivari informed the AHF-affiliated Gjinishi that he intended to reduce "foreign Islamic influence" in the Albanian Muslim community.

Prior to his murder, Tivari controlled finances, personnel decisions, and donations within the Albanian Muslim community. This provided him significant power, enabling him to survive several attempts by extremists trained overseas to replace him or usurp his power.

As of late 2002, AHF was reportedly withdrawing virtually all funding to the Albanian Muslim community. AHF in Albania was to send all proceeds from the sale of some property to the AHF headquarters in Saudi Arabia. As of late 2003, AHF was paying for, through a HAMAS member with close ties to AHF in Albania, security personnel to guard the AHF building in Albania, which had been shut down earlier in 2003.

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Bangladesh

House 1, Road 1, S-6
Uttara, Dhaka
Bangladesh

Information available to the U.S. shows that a senior AHF official deployed a Bangladeshi national to conduct surveillance on U.S. consulates in India for potential terrorist attacks. The Bangladeshi national was arrested in early 1999 in India, reportedly carrying four pounds of explosives and five detonators. The terrorist suspect told police that he intended to attack U.S. diplomatic missions in India. The suspect reportedly confessed to training in al Qaida terrorist camps in Afghanistan, where he met personally with Usama bin Laden in 1994. The suspect first heard of plans for these attacks at the AHF office in Bangladesh.

Ethiopia

Woreda District 24 Kebele Section 13
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Information available to the U.S. shows that AHF in Ethiopia has provided support to Al-Itihad Al-Islamiya (AIAI). In Ethiopia, AIAI has engaged in attacks against Ethiopian defense forces. AIAI has been designated both by the U.S. Government and by the UN 1267 Sanctions Committee.

Ethiopia is one of the countries where AHF's website states that they have operations, but there does not appear to be a formal branch office. As part of our efforts to designate this branch, we are asking that action be taken to ensure that individuals cannot use the name of AHF or act under its auspices within, or in connection with services provided in, Ethiopia.

The Netherlands

(a/k/a Stichting Al Haramain Humanitarian Aid)
Jan Hanzenstraat 14, 1053SV
Amsterdam, the Netherlands

Since 2001, Dutch officials have confirmed that the Al Haramain Humanitarian Aid Foundation located in Amsterdam is part of the larger AHF network and that Al-Aqil, also being designated today, is chairman of this foundation's board of directors. As noted elsewhere in this document, AHF was the founder and leader of AHF and was responsible for all of its activities, including its support of terrorism.

Aqeel Abdulaziz Al-Aqil's

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These activities within the branches took place under the control of Aqeel Abdulaziz Al-Aqil, the founder and long-time leader of AHF and a suspected al Qaida supporter. Al-Aqil has been identified as AHF's Chairman, Director General and President in a variety of sources and reports. As AHF's founder and leader, Al-Aqil controlled AHF and was responsible for all AHF activities, including its support

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for terrorism. Having been under investigation in late 2003, by March 2004 Al-Aqil was reportedly no longer leading AHF activities; however, some reports indicate Al-Aqil may still be in a position to exercise control or influence over AHF.

When viewed as a single entity, AHF is one of the principal Islamic NGOs providing support for the al Qaida network and promoting militant Islamic doctrine worldwide. Under Al Aqil's leadership of AHF, numerous AHF field offices and representatives operating throughout Africa, Asia, Europe and North America appeared to be providing financial and material support to the al Qaida network. Terrorist organizations designated by the U.S. including Jemmah Islammiya, Al-Ittihad Al-Islamiya, Egyptian Islamic Jihad, HAMAS and Lashkar E-Taibah received funding from AHF and used AHF as a front for fundraising and operational activities.

Under Al-Aqil's leadership, AHF implemented its tasks through its offices and representatives, which span more than 50 countries around the world. AHF maintained nine general committees and several other "active committees" that included the "Continuous Charity Committee, African Committee, Asian Committee, Da'wah and Sponsorship Committee, Masjid Committee, Seasonal Projects Committee, Doctor's Committee, European Committee, Internet and the American Committee, the Domestic Committee, Zakaat Committee and the Worldwide Revenue Promotion Committee."

After the AHF branch in Bosnia was designated in 2002, it immediately began efforts to avoid these sanctions. Despite the joint efforts of the United States and Saudi Arabia to designate the al Qaida-affiliated AHF Bosnia branch office, and the subsequent raid of this office by Bosnian authorities on June 3, 2002, all AHF employees were ordered to avoid cooperating with Bosnian and other authorities under Al-Aqil's leadership. In 2003, AHF headquarters in Saudi Arabia provided instructions to AHF in Bosnia for the disposition of AHF assets. These instructions provided for actions contravening local and international counter terrorism laws and regulations. Al-Aqil stated that AHF's work in Bosnia would continue. After the Bosnian branch reconstituted itself under the name "Vazir," the U.S. and Saudi Arabia joined in designating the branch as an alias for the AHF-Bosnian branch.

These entities are subject to designation under Executive Order 13224 pursuant to paragraphs (d)(i) and (d)(ii) based on a determination that they assist in, sponsor or provide financial, material, or technological support for, or financial or other services to or in support of, or are otherwise associated with, persons listed as subject to E.O. 13224. These branches also meet the standard for inclusion in the United Nations' 1267 Sanctions Committee's consolidated list because of the support provided to UBL, al Qaida or the Taliban,

Inclusion on the 1267 Committee's list triggers international obligations on all member countries, requiring them to freeze the assets of these offices. Publicly identifying these supporters of terrorism is a critical part of the international campaign to counter terrorism. Additionally, other organizations and individuals are put on notice that they are prohibited from doing business with them.

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Blocking actions are critical to combating the financing of terrorism. When an action is put into place, any assets existing in the formal financial system at the time of the order are to be frozen. Blocking actions serve additional functions as well, acting as a deterrent for non-designated parties who might otherwise be willing to finance terrorist activity; exposing terrorist financing "money trails" that may generate leads to previously unknown terrorist cells and financiers, disrupting terrorist financing networks by encouraging designated terrorist supporters to disassociate themselves from terrorist activity and renounce their affiliation with terrorist groups; terminating terrorist cash flows by shutting down the pipelines used to move terrorist-related assets; forcing terrorists to use alternative, more costly and higher-risk means of financing their activities; and engendering international cooperation and compliance with obligations under U.N. Security Council Resolutions.

On March 11, 2002, the United States and Saudi Arabia initiated joint public efforts against terrorist support networks by designating and blocking the funds of the Somalia and Bosnia-Herzegovina branches of AHF based on evidence these branches were diverting charitable funds to terrorism. In 2003, the Saudi government ordered AHF to close all of its overseas branches. AHF stated it closed several branches, but continued monitoring by the United States and Saudi Arabia indicated that some branches, and/or former officials associated with these branches, were either continuing to operate or maintaining other plans to avoid these measures, such as the Bosnia-Herzegovina branch attempting to reconstitute itself and continue operations under the name "Vazir." Similarly, the Indonesian branch of AHF also sought to operate under an alias.

To counter these and other efforts, on December 22, 2003, the United States and Saudi Arabia announced the designation of Vazir, as an a/k/a for the AHF branch in Bosnia-Herzegovina. On January 22, 2004, the U.S. and Saudi Arabia announced the designation of AHF branches in Indonesia, Kenya, Tanzania and Pakistan. The Saudi Arabian government made it clear to host countries that these branch offices should not be considered Saudi entities and should be treated appropriately under local law.

The United States works to preserve the sanctity of charitable giving and the value of humanitarian aid provided by charities of all faiths. In this context, we are working to identify those charities that are abusing the trust of their donors. In addition to today's designation, several other charities have been designated by the United States because of their support of terrorism, including:

- Makhtab al-Khidamat/Al Kifah (formerly U.S.-based)
- Al Rashid Trust (Pakistan)
- WAFA Humanitarian Organization (Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and UAE)
- Rabita Trust (Pakistan)
- The Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development (U.S.)
- Ummah Tarner E-Nau (Pakistan)

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- Revival of Islamic Heritage Society (Kuwait, Afghanistan and Pakistan)
- Afghan Support Committee (Pakistan)
- Aid Organization of the Ulema (Pakistan)
- Global Relief Foundation (U.S.)
- Benevolence International Foundation (U.S.)
- Benevolence International Fund (Canada)
- Bosanska Idealna Futura (Bosnia)
- Lajnat al Daawa al Islamiyya (Kuwait)
- Stichting Benevolence International Nederland (Netherlands)
- Al Aqsa Foundation (U.S., Europe, Pakistan, Yemen, South Africa)
- Comité de Bienfaisance et de Secours aux Palestiniens (France)
- Association de Secours Palestinien (Switzerland)
- Interpal (UK)
- Palestinian Association in Austria (Austria)
- Sanibil Association for Relief and Development (Lebanon)
- Al Akhtar Trust (Pakistan)
- Six other branches of AHF (Bosnia, Indonesia, Kenya, Pakistan, Somalia, and Tanzania) (March 2002 and January 2004)

The United States is committed to rooting out terrorism by halting those who provide financial support for nefarious acts. With this designation, 374 individuals and entities will have been designated under President Bush's Executive Order aimed at freezing the assets of terrorists and their supporters. Nearly \$200 million in terrorist-related assets has been frozen or seized as a result of efforts by the United States and its allies.